

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 029979 ACTION USDEL SECRETARY DTD 07 FEB

QTE

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QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (NIXON, RICHARD M.) CH, US

SUBJECT: VIP VISIT: FORMER PRESIDENT AND MRS. RICHARD
M. NIXON

FOLLOWING ARE THE RELEVANT EXCERPTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT
SPOKESMAN'S FEBRUARY 6 PRESS BRIEFING:

Q: BOB, HAVE YOU GOT ANYTHING ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE
CHINESE THAT PRESIDENT NIXON WILL BE VISITING CHINA?

A: I DO NOT REALLY HAVE ANYTHING TO ADD TO WHAT THE
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SECRETARY HAS ALREADY SAID ON THE HILL TO REPORTERS WHEN

HE LEFT THE HEARING THIS MORNING: THAT, OBVIOUSLY, PRESIDENT NIXON HAD THE HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT OF HAVING BEEN THE PRESIDENT WHO OPENED UP OUR RELATIONS WITH CHINA; AND THAT, THEREFORE, THE FORMER PRESIDENT'S VISIT, AS A PRIVATE CITIZEN, WOULD SYMBOLIZE THAT RELATIONSHIP, WHICH WE EXPECT TO GROW BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

Q: WILL ANY STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS ACCOMPANY MR. NIXON?

A: NO. I BELIEVE IT IS EXCLUSIVELY A PRIVATE VISIT, BUT IT HAS ONLY BEEN ANNOUNCED TODAY SO I JUST DO NOT KNOW THE DETAILS BUT IT IS A PRIVATE VISIT.

Q: WHAT IS THE --

Q: JUST A SECOND. WHAT IS THE SPECIFIC ANSWER? THERE WILL BE NO STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL?

A: I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY, BUT IT WAS ONLY ANNOUNCED TODAY. IT HAS ONLY BEEN ANNOUNCED TODAY, BUT IT IS A PRIVATE VISIT.

Q: DO YOU KNOW IF THE CHINESE ARE SENDING A PLANE OVER TO PICK HIM UP?

A: I DO NOT KNOW. I SAW A PRESS REPORT TO THAT EFFECT, BUT I DO NOT KNOW. ANY DETAILS ON IT, REALLY, WILL HAVE TO COME FROM PRESIDENT NIXON OR THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT.

Q: WHEN YOU SAY A PRIVATE VISIT, YOU MEAN THIS GOVERNMENT WON'T PAY THE EXPENSES; IS THAT WHAT YOU MEAN?

A: I MEAN THAT HE IS GOING AS A PRIVATE CITIZEN. HE WAS INVITED BY THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO BE THEIR GUEST.

Q: WILL WE PAY HIS EXPENSES TO CHINA?

A: NO.

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Q: WHEN DID THE STATE DEPARTMENT FIND OUT ABOUT THIS TRIP?

A: THE GOVERNMENT FOUND OUT, AS I UNDERSTAND, YESTERDAY. AMBASSADOR HAN HSU INFORMED THE WHITE HOUSE IN THE AFTERNOON ABOUT THE PRECISE DATES. HOWEVER, WHEN THE SECRETARY VISITED PRESIDENT NIXON EARLIER IN THE WEEK, WHEN HE WAS IN CALIFORNIA, I BELIEVE THAT THE

FORMER PRESIDENT MENTIONED IN GENERAL TERMS ABOUT A VISIT TO CHINA BUT WITHOUT ANY SPECIFICS.

Q: WHEN DID HE SEE FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON?

A: I BELIEVE THAT WAS MONDAY MORNING, WHEN HE WAS IN LOS ANGELES FOR THE VISIT OF MR. RABIN.

Q: HE WENT OUT TO SAN CLEMENTE, DID HE?

A: YES.

Q: WHEN WAS THIS -- MONDAY MORNING, YOU SAY?

A: YES.

Q: HOW LONG A MEETING?

A: I DO NOT KNOW. IT WAS WELL REPORTED IN THE WEST COAST NEWSPAPERS, AS I UNDERSTAND IT.

Q: WAS IT?

Q: WOULDN'T YOU SUPPOSE, AS IS CUSTOMARY, MR. NIXON WOULD BE COMING BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT BEFORE AND AFTER HIS TRIP? YOU DO THAT WITH JOHN TUNNEY'S ASSISTANTS; I SUPPOSE YOU WOULD DO THAT WITH THE FORMER PRESIDENT.

A: WE ARE CERTAINLY PREPARED TO OFFER ANY ASSISTANCE OR PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION THAT MR. NIXON WOULD WANT.

Q: WELL, DO YOU THINK HE WILL BE CARRYING ANY MESSAGES FOR US OR DOING ANY BUSINESS FOR US?
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A: I AM JUST NOT IN A POSITION TO ANSWER THAT. I REALLY THINK QUESTIONS OF THAT NATURE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE WHITE HOUSE. IT IS A PRIVATE VISIT, THOUGH.

Q: WHAT DOES IT MEAN, THOUGH, BOB, WHEN YOU SAY WE'RE PREPARED TO OFFER ANY ASSISTANCE?

A: WHEN PRESIDENT NIXON'S SON-IN-LAW AND DAUGHTER VISITED CHINA, WE WERE PREPARED TO PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION THEY WANTED. WE DO THIS CUSTOMARILY.

Q: YOU'RE PREPARED TO. DID YOU, IN FACT?

A: I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THEY ACTUALLY RECEIVED ANY

INFORMATION IN WASHINGTON. I DO KNOW THAT AN EFFORT WAS MADE AND THEY WERE INFORMED THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO BE OF ANY ASSISTANCE. OUR LIAISON OFFICE IN PEKING ALSO WAS PREPARED AND I BELIEVE MET THEM WHEN THEY ARRIVED. I AM REFERRING TO MR. AND MRS. EISENHOWER.

Q: BOB, DO YOU KNOW ABOUT --

Q: THERE WAS ONE STORY, BOB -- AND I'M SORRY I CAN'T TELL YOU WHERE IT ORIGINATED -- THAT, IN FACT, THEY TRIED TO GET SOME KIND OF BRIEFING FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT BEFORE THEY WENT AND RECEIVED KIND OF A COLD SHOULDER AND THEN FOUND TO THEIR AMAZEMENT THAT THEY HAD SUDDENLY BECOME MORE POPULAR IN PEKING ONCE IT WAS LEARNED THAT THEY WERE MEETING WITH TENG HSIAO-P'ING AND MAO.

A: I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IS TRUE, TED.

Q: YOU KNOW THAT THEY WERE OFFERED --

A: YES. I WILL DOUBLE-CHECK. I AM 99 PERCENT SURE THAT I WAS INFORMED THAT THEY WERE CONTACTED AND INFORMED WE WERE READY TO BE OF ANY ASSISTANCE, AND I KNOW OUR LIAISON OFFICE WAS INFORMED. I AM ALMOST SURE THEY WERE MET ON ARRIVAL BY AN OFFICER.
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Q: BUT THEY WERE CONTACTED. IS FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON GOING TO BE CONTACTED IN THE SAME MANNER?

A: I ASSUME HE WILL, BUT I JUST DO NOT KNOW AT THIS POINT. I AM SURE BOTH THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT ARE PREPARED TO OFFER ANY ASSISTANCE WE CAN THAT THE FORMER PRESIDENT MIGHT ASK FOR, BUT I WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT IT IS A PRIVATE VISIT.
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